

UPDATE: TASK FORCE PELICAN

Sunday - September 18, 2005

Department of Transportation & Development

- **Preliminary damage** to roads and bridges in affected area is **\$2.225 billion**.
 - o This does not include roads and bridges that crews have not been able to assess because of high water or debris.
 - o This also does not include other infrastructure costs and related costs, including levees, ports, mass transit, adjustments to Baton Rouge infrastructure, debris removal, ferry and terminal damage, railroads, etc.
 - o Secretary Bradberry and his staff are working over the weekend to pull together a more comprehensive assessment of infrastructure costs.
 - o DOTD officials will travel to Washington, D.C. for Tuesday and Wednesday meetings with members of the Louisiana Congressional Delegation and other Congressional leaders to brief them on the needs and costs.
- **Traffic signal Update**
 - o Work on repairing and replacing traffic signals and signs is progressing.
 - o Status of signals that are now operational (breakdown by parish):
 - St. Charles- 97%
 - Plaquemines- 71%
 - Jefferson- 55%
 - Orleans- 3%
 - St. Bernard- 0%
 - St. Tammany- (no information available)
- DOTD has secured a contractor to sweep I-10 and I-610.
- A towing company is towing abandoned vehicles from the interstate.
- A DOTD contractor began hauling debris on Saturday in St. Tammany, Washington and Tangipahoa parishes.

- The Algiers/Canal and Gretna/Jackson Ave. crossings will open to pedestrians and vehicles on Monday from 6am to 6pm. Pedestrian will have to use the vehicle ramp until damage to the pedestrian facility can be repaired.
- Several contracts have been secured to repair movable bridges. All should be operable within two months except for Bayou Liberty in St. Tammany, which will take six months to repair.
- A team of five Dutch experts from the Directorate General for Public Works and Water Management are in Plaquemines Parish, establishing mobile pump stations there.
- DOTD's customer service center has answered more than 5,000 calls from the public since Aug. 31.

Department of Health & Hospitals

- DHH has updated the number of **deaths related to Hurricane Katrina**
 - o The latest update is **646** deaths
- **Secretary Fred Cerise stresses** that residents of St. Bernard parish planning to return home this weekend must use **caution**
 - o Cerise said the elderly, children, people with health conditions -- particularly asthma, allergies or who are immune-compromised, should avoid returning.
 - o Disease surveillance conducted by the federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and DHH in New Orleans area has confirmed that unintentional injuries pose the greatest current health risk for those remaining in the area
 - o For people returning to affected area, health officials say the **minimum precautions** that should be followed are:
 - To use bottled water only
 - Use restroom facilities BEFORE entering the areas
 - Use protective equipment (gloves, proper footwear), completely cover all existing wounds and scrapes
 - Wear long sleeves and long pants
 - Do not use machinery and be on the alert for any possible danger.

Louisiana Housing Finance Agency

- LHFA has established a toll free number to provide displaced citizens as much assistance and information as possible during their stay away from home
- Individuals can call **1-866-310-7971** between the hours of 8:00 am and 9:00 pm.
- Staff members will provide the latest information on housing availabilities, and various other points of contact to assist the Louisiana residents during these trying times.

Further information regarding this release may be directed to Jay Rabalais at the LHFA by emailing jralais@lhfa.state.la.us or call 888-454-2001.

Department of Social Services

- The Office of Community Services has located **1,500** of the 2,000 **foster children** in the hurricane-impacted area.
- Foster parents are encouraged to call **1-800-259-3428** to report any information they may have on displaced children affected by Hurricane Katrina.

Department of Education

- U.S. Secretary of Education, Margaret Spellings today announced **\$2.6 billion** for **schools** and **districts impacted by Hurricane Katrina** as well as those schools and districts receiving displaced students
- **\$1.9 billion** of that money will be given to **districts receiving** Katrina's children
 - o Those districts can receive 90% of the state's average per pupil allocation, up to \$7,500
 - o That money can be used for everything from teacher salaries, to transportation, school supplies or other educational costs
- However, Picard did express concern that as he interprets the proposal it does not currently include money for displaced teacher salaries
- Superintendent Picard is grateful for the federal money
 - o He will continue working with Secretary Spelling, FEMA and our congressional delegation as well as local and state officials including Governor Blanco to ensure that all of our educational needs are met.

Board of Regents

- **Sloan Semester**
 - o Southern Regional Education Board, in conjunction with the Sloan Foundation created the Sloan Semester
 - o A catalog of **free electronic courses** available to Katrina-displaced students.
 - o To help college students displaced by Katrina continue their education
 - o The catalog is now open
 - o Students may visit the web site to search for available courses, participating colleges and universities and to start the enrollment process.
 - o Visit Sloan Semester online at <http://www.sloansemester.org>.
- As of Friday, 9/16, the total number of displaced college students re-enrolled at other Louisiana public college and university campuses across the state is **8,629**
- Board of Regents **information hotline** for displaced students
 - o **1-866-415-2269**
 - o www.regents.state.la.us
- **Louisiana Community and Technical College System**
 - o LCTCS established a new toll-free student information line
 - 1-866-310-1586
 - o Previously-published local numbers:
 - 225-922-1633
 - 225-922-0958
 - 225-922-0959
 - 225-922-0804
- **Other Key Public Postsecondary Education Information Numbers**
 - o SUNO students: 1-866-334-7638
 - o SUNO faculty and staff: 1-866-334-8294
 - o UNO students and faculty: 225-578-7816
 - o Delgado CC: 225-216-8336
 - o Nunez CC: 225-216-8344
 - o LTC: 225-922-1633 / 1-800-351-7611
 - o UL System: 225-342-6950

Department of Corrections

- Several state correctional facilities and parish jails on Friday began releasing those individuals evacuated from Orleans Parish Prison who were being held on municipal and parish offenses. Again, these are individuals being held for **minor** offenses with scheduled release dates of 9/16/05 or sooner. A total will be released on Monday.
- State correctional facilities continue to safely house approximately 4000 inmates from Orleans and Jefferson parishes. Parish facilities across the state are housing approximately **2500** inmates.
- Secretary Stalder has traveled to several parish and state facilities over the last few days to ensure staffing, equipment and other needs are being met to keep these facilities and Louisiana communities safe.
- The Department is continuing dialogue with the Humane Society of the United States in reference to providing shelter space and care for hundreds of evacuated and/or abandoned animals due to Hurricane Katrina.
- Probation and Parole officers providing security for the New Orleans Fire Department (stationed at Our Lady of Holy Cross College) will wrap up operations this weekend and return to their home districts.

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